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## GERMANY AND AMERICAN POLICIES

BY BERNHARD DERNBURG,<sup>1</sup>

Formerly Minister of Colonial Affairs of Germany.

I did not come here except as a listener, but after the discussion of this morning, which, I dare say, has been one of the most interesting, one of the most conservative, that it has been my good fortune to listen to, I feel that it is a debt of gratitude to say something as to the resolution that the previous speaker has just spoken of, regarding the safeguards for a permanent peace. I dare say that, of course details omitted and left open, I am in entire sympathy with it, and I do not think that this matter ought to be left to a Hague convention.

This is a world war and must be followed by a world peace—a permanent one—and I do not think there are now a great many people who do not know what the war means and who will not do everything to avert such a catastrophe in the future.

If I may, with the permission of the presiding officer, I will refer to something that was said last evening. One speaker, discussing the shipping of arms and ammunition, said that Germany had protested against the legality or right of shipping arms and ammunition from this country. He made this statement the subject of an attack against the representatives of this country in the United States. I shall not enter into this question, but I do want to say that a nation should not be attacked in this way. I want to state here most emphatically that Germany at no time has disputed the right to ship or to sell arms. This statement that she has is absolutely false.

Every just endeavor by the United States to extend its trade toward South America meets with sympathy in Germany. We believe that the greater the possibility of free intercourse, that the

<sup>1</sup> Remarks made by Dr. Dernburg at the fourth session of the Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the American Academy held in Philadelphia, on April 30 and May 1, 1915.

richer the people get, the more chance they have to provide themselves—the better off everybody is. We believe in specializing according to the genius of nations. All of us, Americans, English and French, can get along very well together. I have been greatly satisfied by the attitude of this country when at the beginning of the war there came statements from England and Russia that this was a time to steal German trade—You said No, this is not in our line and we are not going to take advantage, except a fair advantage, a competitive merchant advantage, against Germany.

You have been told here that Germany has been selling to these countries her cheap goods and that you in this country could not compete with Germany. You have been told that we have been extending credit beyond what was wise. I think this is an overstatement of the case. Very poor people can buy only very cheap goods. If you go to China and see how poor those people are, you would, I think, see that you could not sell them a suit case for one hundred dollars. You must give them less expensive things, and, if you have confidence, some credit.

As far as imports into South America go, you are in a way able to control them as to size. As for exports from South America, you are not able to control them. Supposing you wanted to extend your trade to Brazil in buying more of her coffee crop? What are you going to do with the coffee? You cannot buy more than you are able to consume. As far as Argentina is concerned, you are sellers of cereals and not buyers. Those who want coffee and those who want cereals have got to buy them from Brazil and Argentina. We cannot detach at any one time the trade between two countries from their intercourse with the rest of the world. This world is just one interdependent, interlocking commercial machine, and whoever loses that conception is bound to make a serious mistake. I want to say this because I believe that even in this commercial world there should be a spirit between nations of a greater friendliness. You cannot assist backward nations without extending some facilities—that is, credit—and you cannot do that without extending friendliness; and as the United States was helped by Europe, I hope that the United States will extend help to South America by allowing credit to her, like the rest of the world.